

**MINUTES
BRIDGEVILLE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 17, 2011 – 12:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Town Solicitor Schrader called the meeting to order at 12:02 P.M. This is the second meeting of the Bridgeville Redistricting Committee. The group is tasked to determine where the Town's population is located (based on the 2010 Census) and recommend changes in voting districts to the Commissioners of Bridgeville.

II. ATTENDEES

The Redistricting Committee was in attendance, consisting of Mrs. Diana Chaney, Mrs. Sharon McDowell, Mrs. Carol Warren, Mr. August Daesener and Mr. Jeff Scott. Also in attendance were Solicitor Dennis Schrader, Mr. John Laznik from the University of Delaware College of Arts and Sciences, through the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research (for technical assistance in the redistricting process) and Town Clerk Peggy Smith.

III. SUMMARY OF REDISTRICTING PROCEDURES – SOLICITOR SCHRADER

Solicitor Schrader summarized the November 1st redistricting meeting. He advised Mr. Laznik from the University of Delaware (UD) presented current voting district maps and proposed changes to the current five districts. Three issues surfaced concerning census numbers included in the Town's population totals that represented individuals that are outside the Town boundaries. They include population in the Cannon Crossroads area, Federalsburg Rd. (Lindenmere property annexation) and Earlee Ave. (a "donut hole" of population within Bridgeville limits that is not part of the Town.) Mr. Laznik has revisited these problem areas and made some proposed changes to the voting district map. It is noted (from the November 1st meeting minutes) that Bridgeville will need to officially present a request to the Census Bureau to remove these population figures from the Town's census data, and therefore, out of our voting districts. It was mentioned that the +/- 5% parameters do not apply to municipal elections; however, Solicitor Schrader believes it is appropriate to stay within those parameters to protect the Town from a potential lawsuit concerning redistricting.

Solicitor Schrader reminded the committee members that there is a +/- 5% margin that each voting district must subscribe to. The ideal number for each district is currently 409; however, a +/- 5% margin is allowed. Solicitor Schrader reminded the committee members of the seven criteria required for redistricting. (These are found in the November 1st meeting minutes.) He also advised they are making a recommendation to the Commissioners of Bridgeville, who will make the final decision on redistricting. The recommendation from this body will be placed in Ordinance form and presented to the Commissioners. Once the Ordinance is introduced there will be public hearings for comment.

**IV. PRESENTATION OF CENSUS DATA –
MR. JOHN LAZNIK, UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE**

Mr. John Laznik works for the University of Delaware (UD) Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research and deals with geographic information systems. He is under a contractual arrangement to assist the Town with redistricting. He has the Town's census data and computer-generated visual aids that allow him to shift the census data around within our five districts to meet the district requirements.

Mr. Laznik brought new information with him concerning the division of census blocks. At the last meeting he understood that a census block could not be split in creating voting districts. His superior at the UD Center has advised that census blocks may be split to create voting districts. Mr. Laznik advised this will give Bridgeville much more flexibility in developing its districts within the population margins allowed. Solicitor Schrader advised he did not feel uncomfortable splitting census blocks for this redistricting exercise.

V. DISCUSSION OF DATA – REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE

Mr. Laznik directed the committee's attention to the largest census block in Town of 331. It includes houses on S. Main St. and several apartment/housing complexes. This census block is currently split and it would be advantageous to split it in this redistricting, as well. Although it is a low priority on the list, it is appropriate to consider where the current Commissioners live and whether it is possible to keep them in the districts they currently serve. With the flexibility of splitting census blocks, it will be possible to accommodate all five of the current Commissioners.

Solicitor Schrader questioned the total number of houses in Town. He suggested that if we divided our total population by the number of households, we would have the average number of persons in each household. This would aid in correctly removing the population from our figures that aren't actually in Town limits (the "issue" areas recorded above.) Mr. Laznik advised the census depends on the county 911 addressing to identify all of the housing addresses; it is approximately 97-98% accurate. He can find out that same information within an individual census block by dividing the number of dots (homes) by the total population in that block. This number would be a legitimate estimate of population per household in a census block.

Mr. Laznik used two methodologies to review the "issue areas". Concerning the Earlee Ave. population which the census included in Bridgeville Town limits incorrectly, Mr. Laznik was able to ascertain that there are approximately 1.96 individuals per household, which extrapolated to 36 units of population on Earlee Ave. They are outside of Town limits and should be removed from Town population figures.

The second issue of inaccurate population was located on Federalsburg Rd. (Lindenmere development annexation). No homes were annexed into Town; the annexation was land only. Mr. Laznik advised the census boundaries do not exactly mirror the Town boundaries; there is a slight discrepancy. It was noted that some properties close to Town on Federalsburg Rd. are commercial

properties and would not affect census data. All 23 individuals identified on Federalsburg Rd. are outside of Town limits and should be removed from Town population figures.

The third issue of inaccurate population was located at the Cannon Crossroads area. It was determined that 6 individuals are outside of Town limits and should be removed from Town population. Mr. Laznik feels that 6 is a small number and does not affect the 5% parameters for District 2, Heritage Shores, of which they are a part. Solicitor Schrader advised the committee should give the same consideration to these 6 individuals. They are outside of Town limits and should be removed from Town population.

Solicitor Schrader summarized the following deletions to the Bridgeville population:

- 2,048 U.S. Census figure
- 36 Earlee Ave.
 - 23 Federalsburg Rd.
 - 6 Cannon Crossroads area

1,983 Adjusted Bridgeville Population

Dividing the adjusted population of 1,983 by 5 (number of districts needed) would equal an ideal number of 397 in each district with a +/-5% range of 377 – 416. Solicitor Schrader recommended we revisit the current district population numbers with the above non-residents removed, the adjusted population range of 377-416 considered and blocks shifted with as little district change as possible to meet the goal of 397 +/- 5 %.

Original Voting District Numbers

District #1 289 (Jay Mervine)
District #2 457 (Lawrence Tassone)
District #3 234 (Pat Correll)
District #4 409 (Paul Kovack)
District #5 255 (Steve McCarron)

The remainder of the meeting consisted of computer manipulations investigating census blocks and moving populations between districts to reach the goal number of 397 +/- 5 %. Mr. Laznik reviewed the “outside boundary” districts of #1 and #2 first and then considered the “inside districts” of 3, 4 and 5. Some of the manipulations involved keeping District 3 Commissioner intact in the district. Committee member Mr. Daesener asked if it is safe to say that we must balance the districts regardless of personalities involved. He believes the proper balance is the most important issue. Solicitor Schrader advised the goal is to have districts that are compact, contiguous and that consider traditional neighborhoods. Mr. Laznik believes it is appropriate to remove population that is not within Town limits. He also believes it is appropriate to consider where the Commissioners live, as they will vote to adopt or reject the proposed districts. Mr. Laznik reiterated the importance of defining districts by easy-to-understand boundaries, such as streets.

Mr. Bill Atwood asked if Commissioner Correll's district (3) is still contiguous to Heritage Shores. Mr. Laznik advised it is no longer contiguous and will not represent the eastern area of Heritage Shores, as proposed at the November 1st meeting. Mr. Atwood did not understand such a fundamental change being made which will affect part of Heritage Shores. Solicitor Schrader advised the reduction of population on Federalsburg Rd. and Earlee Ave. required the shifting of districts to maintain population parameters. Mr. Atwood did not believe the removal of as few as 36 people is significant; however, Solicitor Schrader stated it does make a difference when your margin of error is only 20 people. There is a delicate balance in the population between District #3 and #5 for the Commissioner in District #3 to stay in the district. The Heritage Shores residents east of Heritage Shores Circle are now in District #5. Mr. Atwood believes Commissioner Correll would represent the area of Heritage Shores east of Heritage Shores Drive very well and would like to see changes to the district map to make that possible. Mr. Laznik does not believe it would be possible to add the smaller Heritage Shores group to District #3 due to contiguity. He advised these district boundaries will last until the next decennial census unless the Town annexes property with residents. Another resident mentioned the influx of new population to Heritage Shores in the future and suggested consideration of that growth in these districting decisions. Solicitor Schrader advised we are wedded to the 2010 census figures.

Mr. Kenny McDowell suggested keeping Heritage Shores intact as one district due to its identification as a neighborhood and the added community feature of a golf course, despite its population over 450. Mr. James Kendall did not believe that was necessary; he believes we are all part of Bridgeville and Heritage Shores shouldn't be designated separately. Committee member Mrs. McDowell believes it will be nice to have some of the Heritage Shores residents in her district, as this proposal shows.

Mr. Laznik and Solicitor Schrader continued to review Districts #4 and #5 to bring each district to correct population parameters, including contiguity.

New Proposed Voting District Totals (Changes from November 1, 2011 Meeting)

District #1 289 (Jay Mervine)
320 (from 11/1 mtg) + 66 (Elizabeth Cornish Landing) + 18 (300 block of S. Main St.) = **404**

District #2 457 (Lawrence Tassone)
418 (from 11/1 mtg) – 6 (Cannon Crossroads) = **412**
Heritage Shores will be divided by redistricting. A natural boundary of Heritage Circle Dr. has been used as the dividing line. Not all of the units are necessarily occupied at this time.

District #3 234 (Pat Correll)
497 (from 11/1mtg) – 66 (Elizabeth Cornish Landing) – 18 (300 block of S. Main St.) = **413**
Includes partial Elizabeth Cornish Landing, Canterbury Apts., Laverty Lane and partial S. Main St.)

District #4 409 (Paul Kovack)

401 (from 11/1 mtg) – 23 (Federalsburg Rd.) = 378

This district has had a decrease in its number due to the removal of population out of Town limits on Federalsburg Rd. and Earlee Ave.

District #5 255 (Steve McCarron)

412 (from 11/1 mtg) – 36 (Earlee Ave.) = 376

This district includes a portion of Heritage Shores east of Heritage Shores Dr.

Mr. Laznick advised this district is one below the 5%+/- threshold and would accommodate additional growth at Heritage Shores.

Solicitor Schrader suggested the committee delay a recommendation to the Commissioners and meet again in two weeks with a corrected map representing the proposed districting version from today's meeting.

Deadlines are eminent. The Municipal Election takes place on the first Saturday in March, which will fall on March 3, 2012. Candidate registration ends Friday, February 3, 2012. There must be an appropriate length of time to inform residents of their voting district. Three districts are up for election in 2012 – District #1, District #2 and District #3.

Solicitor Schrader advised he originally proposed a much earlier date for beginning the redistricting project. There may not be time for a proposed Public Hearing before the Voting District Ordinance comes before the Town Commission for a public hearing and passage. These minutes will be available as soon as possible and Mr. Laznik will revise the maps and make them available to the committee before the next meeting.

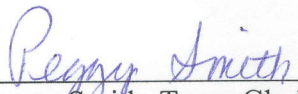
It was recommended that the committee re-assemble on November 29, 30 or December 1. It was determined that Mrs. Chaney will be out of town that week; she stated that she did not have any concerns about the present map or District #4 that she represents.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M.

(Please note some of the district population numbers from this meeting were determined to be incorrect and revised by Mr. Laznik. Corrections were emailed to committee members.)

Respectfully submitted,


Peggy Smith, Town Clerk